

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

No. 264.—THIRD SERIES. SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 1894. PRICE TWOPENCE.

MARRIED TO ORDER.

A ROMANCE OF MODERN DAYS.

BY ESME STUART.

Author of "Joan Pellaot," "A Woman of Forty," "Kestell of Greystone," etc., etc.

CHAPTER III.

AN ARISTOCRATIC PROGRAMME.

HALF an hour after this, Philip Gillbanks followed the strange Prince through the cold, gloomy hall, then down a long stone passage. He was making a mental picture of the Princess, meaning to paint it for the amusement of his sister Clytie and of his friend Forster. Clytie was a born Republican. She despised all the aristocracy in a body, and was so advanced in her views, that she desired to pull down every existing institution of Church and State. She and Forster, coming from opposite poles of society, had apparently met at the same point; but where mere opinions are the point of interest, appearances are very deceptive.

Philip had by this time decided that he was in a house where all its members were severally and collectively afflicted with delusions, but that, as he was a stranger taken in on sufferance and kindly allowed food and shelter, he must of course respect their idiosyncrasies. Feeling weary, his greatest wish at this moment was to be allowed to retire to bed; but he was so thankful for the hospitality he had received at the hands of Royalty that he could not behave as if he were at a common inn.

The Prince paused at the end of the passage as if he wished to make a remark; however, either from shyness or from inability to frame his thoughts he said nothing, but slowly opened the door.

Philip's frame of mind was by this time decidedly cheerful. He was expecting to see a Princess who should in manners and appearance match the Prince. The first thing he noticed, when he stepped over this new threshold, was that he was in a large, old-fashioned room, oak-panelled, and with deep recesses to the great bay windows. There was here a look of far greater comfort and refinement than he had seen elsewhere in the house, and the stately simplicity of the furniture at once impressed him as being of very ancient date. A lamp was standing on the table, placed on a slightly raised platform running all along the western end of the room. The effect was very quaint and picturesque, and afterwards Philip found out that the reason of the raised floor was that a small western chamber had at some time been added to the drawing-room, and that the higher floor level had been left untouched.

Suddenly it seemed to the young man that he was being ushered into the presence of Royalty, or at least of some being quite above him in social rank. Having in a few seconds become accustomed to the dim light, he was struck speechless by the vision of the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. She was dressed in black, but an old-fashioned white embroidered fichu was thrown over her shoulders and crossed at her waist. Her hair was coiled round the top of her head, leaving the slender throat well defined.

The so-called Duke was sitting beside her, and his picturesque attire greatly added to the mystification. Philip was so utterly unprepared for this strange revelation of beauty, that he was seized with a feeling that the whole episode was a dream, and that, having fallen asleep on the fell, he had been led, like some

bewitched knight of folk-lore, to this strange court in order to be lured to his destruction.

The Princess was at this moment bending over an embroidery frame, and Philip noticed her small white hands, one above and one below, swiftly taking and retaking the needle.

As the door shut, the Princess paused and looked down the long room, trying to pierce the gloom which enveloped the opposite side. Then Philip saw her distinctly, and noted also—indeed, it was impossible not to note—the look of haughty pride which marred the expression of the otherwise perfect features. The handsome man sitting beside her might have been her father, so striking was the likeness between them, but her innate look of distinction was even more noticeable than his.

Philip's feeling of scornful merriment immediately disappeared as he followed the awkward Prince up to the dais.

"Penelope, here is the stranger," he said gruffly.

The Princess rose slowly; she did not even hold out the tips of her fingers, but made a very distant bow, which her exalted position appeared to render even more distant. She motioned him to a chair below the dais, whilst the Duke, who had at once risen and stepped down to meet Philip, sat down on another close beside him.

"I must apologise," began Philip, feeling so utterly abashed and surprised that he was conscious of appearing as awkward as the Prince himself.

The Princess waved her hand a little impatiently as she answered:

"Jim Oldcorn could not have done otherwise than to bring you here. You are a stranger, or you would not have missed your path."

"It was extremely foolish of me," said Philip, suppressing the desire to say, "Your Royal Highness."

"Not at all," said the Duke, with the most courtly bow, whilst the tone, polite as it was, seemed to poor Philip to affirm rather than to deny his remark. The Princess said nothing, but continued her work in silence.

"Oblige me, David, by closing the door," continued the Duke. "If the ghost finds it open she may wish to enter." The smile on his lips as he said this was full of subtle irony, and, accompanied as it was by his courtly gestures, it struck Philip as strangely fascinating. At the

same moment, looking furtively up at the Princess, he noticed the smile repeated on her face.

"The Duke concludes that you belong to the new régime," she said, turning very slightly towards Philip, "and that you have no fears of ghosts."

Again Philip was almost struck dumb by the strange difference he had found in this strange household where the son could hardly express his thoughts at all, where the father could not speak without strong language, and where the uncle and niece expressed themselves in perfect English.

For a moment he again imagined the whole was a delusion, and that he was witnessing a ghostly repetition of a long-past scene.

He grasped the arm of his chair; it certainly felt like good, solid English oak, and was no mere shadow.

"Of course you have a family ghost. I have often wished to see one. Is yours ever visible?"

"It is seen here at times," continued the Princess quietly, in her clear, silvery voice, "but only very occasionally. Still, my ancestress is often heard. If she takes a liking to any one she will follow them down the passage, but to see her is a sign of misfortune."

The Prince, who was standing awkwardly on one leg, burst out laughing.

"I've never seen her."

"I am not surprised," was his sister's answer, and Philip detected the tone of scorn in the young lady's voice; "but she was seen when you were born."

The Duke smiled and took a pinch of snuff, an act which Philip thought added to the old-world feeling, but he also noticed how well the action showed off the shape of the well-formed hand.

"Your sister repeats hearsay, as you are her elder."

"Then I think the hearsay is from your mouth," she said, "and I know that is good authority."

"You must excuse any little warmth of feeling we may show about our family ghost," continued the Duke, looking at Philip. "I believe there are but few left in the country. Have you studied the subject of apparitions?"

"No, I don't interest myself much about ghosts, but my friend—Forster Bethune—"

"I beg your pardon, I did not catch your friend's name."

"Bethune, Forster Bethune ; he is the greatest friend I have, and he is deeply interested in spirits and apparitions. He collects them."

"Indeed!" Again came the delicate tone of irony, which made Philip wince.

"Not the spirits themselves, of course, but stories of them. He means to write a book with quite a new explanation of apparitions. I forget what it is, but Bethune has new explanations for everything."

"He must be refreshing in this age of old ideas," said the Princess.

"The world is never good enough for you, Penzie," said her brother suddenly ; indeed, whenever he made a remark, by some trick of wild nature his words appeared to be shot forth as peas from a pea-shooter.

"Apparently it is good enough for your needs, so it must have reached a high state of perfection," was the answer.

"Hang it," muttered the Prince, "I'm off. Father wants to load that timber this evening, and I had better help him."

"To-night?" said the Duke, glancing at the curtainless window, which offered a desolate prospect of foggy rain.

"The men take twice as long as is necessary."

"I suppose some light is necessary even to load timber," said the Princess.

The Prince laughed. Whenever he did not see the drift of his sister's remarks—and this was frequently the case, because, to use his expression, she was "so deuced clever"—he hid his ignorance with laughter.

He now walked hurriedly towards the door, and slammed it after him. He was seen no more that evening. Philip was too wise to question Royalty, but he could not reconcile the fact of the King and his heir calmly walking out into the dripping rain on business, and the Princess and the Duke—belonging apparently to another race of thinking beings—sitting in a quaint room, speaking in the polished tones of highly-bred English people.

"If I be I," he thought, "this is all past my unravelling. I wish Forster were here ; even Clytie might help me out," but, having no friendly help at hand to unravel the mystery, Philip's eyes could only fix themselves on the beautiful woman before him, wondering what it all meant, and more and more fascinated by the turn of her head and every movement of her beautifully-formed hands. He had been weary before

entering the room, now he was glad to sit here, even on sufferance, so that he might watch her. He addressed most of his remarks to the Duke, but he secretly cared only as to what might be their effect on this Princess. This name now appeared to him quite natural ; half an hour ago it had sounded ridiculous. He was willing to conclude that the idea of Royalty had originated with her, and that the other titles had followed as a joke, though, indeed, as far as the Duke was concerned, he might be said not unworthily to invade the aristocratic circle. He was, perhaps, a little too clever and too sarcastic for the ordinary run of Dukes, that is, of the Dukes of whom Forster spoke, for Philip himself was not acquainted with the race, and the one heir to a dukedom whom he had known at Oxford had not given him any high ideas of that select circle. But this Duke of Greybarrow would have "adorned" any society, if, indeed, it had not shunned him for his subtle sarcasms, of which Philip was conscious without having any specific thing to complain of as to the remarks which fell from his lips.

When the Prince had shut the door there was a noticeable pause. The Princess frowned slightly, and her hands moved more swiftly above and below the frame ; then gradually the disturbing thoughts, whatever they might be, appeared to be laid to rest. Suddenly she secured her needle, and looked at her uncle. Philip did not lose any of her expressions, and he noticed at once that the beautiful face unconsciously assumed a look of tenderness, which was certainly not habitual to it.

Philip thought : "If she is proud she can love. She loves her uncle, but how quaintly she addresses him."

"Has the King sold all that wood, sir?" she asked.

"I believe so, Penzie."

"Will he replant the hillside ?"

"That is extremely doubtful."

The Princess tapped her foot impatiently.

"It is Jim Oldcorn's fault ; he loves to haggle over a bargain."

"He merely follows suit," said the Duke, taking another pinch of snuff, "and you must give him his due, Penzie, for the fellow never revokes."

Then the Princess evidently bethought herself that the conversation was not one a stranger should listen to. She turned towards Philip, apparently looking at him attentively for the first time since his entrance, and Philip felt that he coloured

slightly. What an idiot he was; but, on the other hand, why was she so beautiful? It was ridiculous and out of place to find such a being in such strange surroundings. Clytie, who considered herself clever, and indeed was so, could not stand comparison with this north-country maiden.

Again he said to himself: "Am I dreaming?" But the Princess was speaking to him.

"I think you said your name was—"

Philip had not spoken on this insignificant subject, but he hastened to supply the omission, remembering at the same time that he did not know how to address the Princess, except by that strange and—well, yes, ridiculous title. Of course she could not be a real Princess, for Blood Royal cannot hide itself in any outlandish corner of the British Isles.

"I was only wondering the other day, Mr. Gillbanks, whether the modern spirit of unbelief in spirits or the modern power of believing in anything and everything were the strongest. Living here almost outside the world, one has to think out a few problems."

"My friend Bethune is full of ideas and speculations. I often contradict him for the sake of hearing him fulminate against the opposition."

"Your friend is interested, I suppose, in many things?" she asked, with the half-hidden longing of some one who wishes to go forth and do battle, but has to be content merely with tales of war.

"Oh, he is quite different to other men. Though aristocratic by birth, he thinks—" Philip stopped short, for he was going to say, "that all titles should be abolished."

"Thinks what?" said the Princess.

"That the world needs much reformation," stammered Philip, whilst the Duke remarked:

"Is your friend a Bethune of Bethune Castle?"

"Yes; his father is still alive, but I should not be surprised if my friend settles to cut off the entail and sell the place, for I fancy he will never marry."

"If the male entail were abolished," said the Princess quietly, "properties could go on in the female line."

"And sometimes it would be greatly to the advantage of old families," said the Duke thoughtfully.

"I should think so indeed," said the Princess, lightly tapping her foot. "What we need in England are great families who

will understand what is due to themselves and to their country, who could all stand together to uphold their rights, and to crush the arrogance of the middle class."

"The arrogance of—" murmured Philip.

"Yes, of the middle class. It is they who have brought England to her low condition. They who imagine that money can do everything without birth. If we old families could rally round each other, then there would yet be hope for us. I believe that even now if one man or one woman from our best nobility would make a stand against all vulgar ideas, I believe that even now England would rise again."

The girl's eyes were kindled. Self-generated and mysterious energy which no man can explain, and which each one calls by a different name, had called forth her enthusiasm.

The Duke's lips, on the contrary, kept their peculiar, quiet smile, but Philip saw plainly that he glanced admiringly at his niece.

"You said just now, Penzle, that you believed that one woman could do it. I venture to say that I know that woman. Tell us how she would set about it."

The Princess rose slowly, apparently quite unconscious of the wonderful beauty she possessed, and also quite unconscious of the far-away look in her dark eyes and of the bright colour that suddenly flushed her oval face. She stood against the dark woodwork and clasped her hands, but there was not the least theatrical appearance about her; it needs but small insight to recognise nature from art.

"How would she do it? Oh! I know, I can see it all—only—she must be rich. She must be able to cope with the vulgar world on its own footing. She must have money, and use it as it should be used. She must come among her own circle as one of themselves, a true aristocrat, and there she must show them what they have lost and what they could regain by keeping true to themselves."

The Princess paused.

"Yes," said the Duke, "it would be a fine mission." Philip, keen watcher as he was, could not tell whether the man were really appreciative of his niece's words or merely covering them with his veneer of scorn. "But, my dear Penzle, the question is, would she succeed?"

"Yes," continued the Princess, "if she could come amongst them rich enough to

despise them, and rich enough to accept no favours from any of them, then they would listen to her, and they would see the sense of all she told them. She would show them how sordid are all their motives when they patronise the rich merely because they are rich ; how small their aims ; how worthless their ambitions."

"In fact, she would change them altogether," put in the Duke. Then, as if politeness obliged him to address Philip, he continued : "What is your opinion, Mr. Gillbanks ?"

The Princess seemed suddenly to recollect the presence of the stranger. She sat down again at her frame and slowly took up her needle, as if Philip's opinion were of no consequence to her. He at once felt the change, and he knew that his ideas were nothing to her.

"I should like you to hear my friend Bathune talk on these matters. He has great ideas of reforming the world, but he would set about it in rather a different manner. I dare say, though, if you were to discuss the subject with him, it would end in your paths leading much to the same end."

A slight but exquisite curl of the girl's upper lip made Philip recognise that he was speaking to a woman who would certainly not change her path.

"Your friend may be clever, but, as for myself, I can see but one way. Leadership must come from the superior class. It is with the educated classes and with the true aristocracy alone that reform is of any value. You know the common people copy us ; they are proud to imitate our ways and our doings. It is utterly foolish to talk of wisdom resting with the people. If it does, why do we strive to educate them ? No, wisdom must flow from the higher channel."

"The woman I am thinking of," said the Duke, "has seen very little of the world ; she has read much and thought much ; but do you not think, Penelope, that if she were launched upon that whirlpool which we call society, she would be simply wrecked in the maelstrom ?"

"Some women might be. Oh, yes, some might be, but the nobly born have more staying power — much more — than the people. Put a girl whose family is 'nouveau riche' in that position, and of course she will be swept away by the excitement ; but the other——"

The Duke gave a slight shrug of the shoulders and smiled again.

"The other you think, Princess, would weather the storm ?"

"Yes, yes !" She spoke in a low, clear voice, and Philip was astonished at the strong feeling these two words revealed.

"You are over confident," said her uncle.

"I thought you, too, believed as I do, that it is breeding which conquers in the long run—in the long run, uncle. I thought you at least were true to our old motto : 'Absolutus sum ignavise.'"

"Certainly, with the old rapier, the sword, or the bow ; but modern warfare has discarded all antiquated arms, Penzies. Beside——" The Duke paused then, and said, in quite another tone : "You must be anxious to retire to rest, Mr. Gillbanks. If you will excuse me a minute I will see if all is ready for you."

Philip began to protest, but the Duke, smiling, deprecated his objections and went out of the room. For a few moments there was silence in the chamber, except from the soft click of the needle passing through the stiff material. Philip was longing for Forster's presence, and a whole train of ideas filled his mind. The one which chiefly predominated was :

"Who is she ? What does it all mean ? If these are deluded people, the world would be the better if it were full of them."

"You are on the threshold of the life we have been discussing, I suppose," said the Princess slowly.

She did not speak as if Philip's career were of any interest to her, but as if she, a weak woman, would willingly change places with him, a well-equipped man.

"Yes, I am on the threshold, but——" he wanted to explain that he belonged to the class which she wanted to wipe off the face of the earth, but he could not frame the words, and the Princess evinced no curiosity for information.

"I see you do not agree with me," she said.

"Well, perhaps not altogether, but——"

"I do not blame you ; I do not expect every one to agree with my uncle and myself. Only a few can do so, but our family, having lived here so long——"

"I see you are of course an old family," said Philip, smiling, "but I have not yet heard your family name."

He positively stammered over this remark, so much was he disconcerted before this beautiful girl, resembling no other woman he had ever met. Her glance of almost cold disdain and pride finished his discomfiture.

"We do not advertise ourselves as modern people like to do; for many miles round these glens and mountains there would be no need to do so. All the dalesmen know the King of Rothery."

"Yes," faltered Philip, "I heard that title, but——"

"But what else is there to know?"

"Is it a—a name given in——?"

"Yes, of course, it was given hundreds of years ago. My ancestor was made King of Rothery. I wonder you have never heard that the brave David Winskell, hearing how the fierce border-men were coming to overrun our dales and our mountain fastnesses, rushed forth from this spot and rallied the frightened people. 'I ask only a handful of you to follow me,' he called out, 'then I, David Winskell, will lead you.' And they looked at his face full of belief in his cause and in his country, and they rallied round him, those at least who had stouter hearts than the rest, and David Winskell went out from this very glen, and all night he climbed the fells, and in the early morning when the mist lifted they found themselves face to face with the herd of wild border-men. Then David said: 'They are more in number, but our cause is the best; we fight for our rights and for our lands.' Then he stationed his men behind one of the hillocks, where you lost yourself, and he kept the narrow pass till the border-men were disheartened; then he rushed forth upon them and drove them back over the steep rocks, and their corpses strewed the deep valley beneath, and the eagles came to feed upon them. When evening came again they brought David back in triumph to this glen, and they crowned him King of Rothery. They said his family should always from that time have their rightful title, and that his home should be his people's Palace. Who could deny them, for David's land was allodial, and was held of no superior."

"And ever since then?" said Philip, now seeing that he was indeed in the presence of as true Royal blood as those who claim the title from the world.

"Ever since then—from time immemorial the dalesmen like to say—the Winskells have been Kings of Rothery, from father to son, and if some have failed, there have always been others of the family ready to bear the burden of true greatness."

"I see that it is so," said Philip earnestly, no longer willing to laugh in ridicule, but

entirely conquered by the power of this one of David Winskell's descendants.

Penelope Winskell put away her work and again stood up.

"There are only about two reigning families who could show a pedigree like ours," she said in a tone that was the essence of pride; "but then the others have gold to prop up their poor birthright. We have become poor!"

"And the Gillbanks, who have risen from the lowest rank, are rich," thought Philip, with a feeling of shame, for his wealth seemed to insult the poverty of the Princess. But at this moment the Duke re-entered, and Philip had no longer any wish to smile at his title. Had not the Princess said that some of her family had always been able to bear their honours well? And the Duke most certainly was one of them.

"Your room is prepared for you," said the Duke.

Philip rose and wondered how he ought to bid his hostess good night; but there was no time for thought, the Duke was waiting.

"Good night, Penelope," said her uncle, taking his niece's hand, and bending over it he kissed it in courtly fashion. Philip knew the Queen's hand was kissed by her subjects, so surely he could not err by following the Duke's example. The Princess seemed to take his homage and the low bow that he bestowed upon her quite as her right, and it was only when the Duke had left him at the door of his room that he recalled with new surprise the contrast between the King and the Princess. This time, however, he only smiled, he did not laugh.

As the Duke, having left the guest, was walking down the passage, he met the Princess going to her own room. Even to him she looked like some beautiful old-world apparition, for she was still dreaming of the possible future. The Duke was a great admirer of beauty, and besides this he loved Penelope as if she were his child, for he had done everything for his niece. To him she owed her education, her powers of concentrated thought, and some of her scornful speeches. He was proud of her, though he did not often express his true feelings. As for the Duke, he was a mystery to all about him, and sometimes to himself; but his had been a strange life.

"Well, Penzie, what made you so discursive to-night?" he said, still with his

touch of sarcasm, to which the Princess was too much accustomed to notice.

"It was, I suppose, seeing a glimpse of the outer world that made me speak. We see it so seldom," she said almost sadly.

"And you wish to see it?" There was a slight tone of anxiety discernible in his voice.

"Yes, I wish to see it."

"You shall, Princess. By the way, this young man is an ingenuous cub—he must, I think, be the son of the firm of Gillbanks and Son, known all over the world."

"Firm?"

The Princess was not interested.

"Patent boiler-screw makers! Enormously rich people."

"Oh! a 'nouveau riche'!"

All the scorn the Princess could put into her voice was concentrated in the two words, as she went on to her own room.

A CHAPTER IN NAVAL HISTORY.

NAVAL history is not contained only in the biographies of those whom we have elevated to the Temple of Heroes. We are, as a nation, predisposed to hero-worship, but the opportunities for the sudden making of splendid names are few and far between, while history goes on continually. As Shakespeare says:

There is a history in all men's lives,
Figuring the nature of the times deceased.

We are apt to ignore this, when turning all our gaze and admiration upon the departed great ones, who are smiling serene even in the Shades, because, as Dante says: "On earth their names in Fame's eternal volume shine for aye."

Thus it is that the mute inglorious Miltons and the village Hampdens of the poet's dream are regarded as nebulous impossibilities. How could a Milton be either "mute" or "inglorious"? How could a Hampden remain shut up in a village all his life? It has been said by some one that the voice of Fame is alone the voice of Truth, and this is practically the verdict of the world; but it may be unjust, for all that. Certain it is, at any rate, that even as many men grow so blind in gazing at the sun that they cannot see the beauty of the stars, so we are all too ready to concentrate our gaze on the pet heroes of history, and to miss the smaller lights who helped to make them heroes.

Yet without these smaller lights our world would be dark indeed.

To read the annals of our national glory only by the suspended greater lights is as wrong as Professor Seeley has shown it would be to read the History of England as a mere succession of dynasties. Let us not forget that in the manufacturing of Heroes the world has made many mistakes. Some of these mistakes may have been of omission, as well as of commission.

As a maritime nation we naturally take most pride and delight in our Naval Heroes. And what a cluster of them do we not owe to Bonaparte! The close of the eighteenth, and the opening years of the nineteenth, century were indeed the palmy days for "the sudden making of splendid names." The long years of "the old war" gave us a large selection of gallant men, whose deeds are deathless, and whose memories will be ever green. But they gave us also a larger number whose memories are withered, yet whose works follow them.

Let us take a brief glance at the career of one of these men, who helped to make our glory and to build up our history, but whom a partial hero-worship has permitted us to forget.

Few people now, perhaps, are familiar with the name of Admiral John Markham. Yet he was twice one of the Lords of the Admiralty in the early years of the present century, and for over twenty years he represented the naval borough of Portsmouth in Parliament.

John Markham came of a good stock. His family had been resident in Nottinghamshire for several centuries, and produced a Bishop, two Judges, many Knights of the Shire, several eminent soldiers, and one traitor. This traitor was the "bar sinister" on the family shield, and with him began the decay of the family prosperity. The ruin was completed by one Sir Robert Markham, in the days of James the First, described as "a fatal unthrifit," and "destroyer of this eminent family." The grandson of this "fatal unthrifit" descended so low as to become a common London 'prentice-boy. But he seems to have had some of the original "grit" of the old family in him, for he volunteered for military service in Ireland, under the Duke of York, about 1680.

He married and settled in Ireland, and had a son William, whom he was able to educate at Trinity College, Dublin, and for whom he purchased a commission in the

army. William seems to have been rather harum-scarum in his youth, but by-and-by he married and settled at Kinsale on his half-pay of one hundred pounds a year. There, though proud of his ancient family, he augmented his income by keeping a school. After his wife's death he moved to London, in order to give his three sons the education and up-bringing of gentlemen. To gain the wherewithal he did copying and engrossing work for two solicitors, and he also painted fans, which, in disguise, he sold in the streets. Once more we see the strong heroic trait of the race. One of his younger sons he put into the army, one into the navy. On the eldest, William, he lavished most of his attention and rested all his hopes.

They were well bestowed, for William was the restorer of the family fortunes and fame. Entered as a scholar at Westminster in his fourteenth year, William early attracted attention, and in five years was the captain of the school, and elected a student of Christ Church, Oxford. Among his schoolfellows and companions were Thomas Sheridan, father of the famous Richard Brinsley; Graville Leveson Gower, future Marquis of Stafford; Edmond Burton, the scholar; and Howe and Keppel, the future Admirals. After a few years' residence at Oxford, William was appointed Head Master of Westminster School, in succession to his own old master.

It is gratifying to know that the gallant, self-denying old half-pay Captain lived to see his favourite son in that position of honour, and even to see him still higher. At this time the scholar's most intimate friends were William Murray, future Earl of Mansfield, and Edmund Burke. Among his pupils were Jeremy Bentham; Cyril Jackson, afterwards Dean of Christ Church; and Archibald MacDonald, afterwards Lord Chief Baron. William, now Doctor, Markham married the daughter of a wealthy merchant, and was appointed successively Dean of Rochester, Dean of Christ Church, Chaplain to George the Second, Bishop of Carlisle, Tutor to the young Princes, and Archbishop of York.

He had thirteen children—six boys and seven girls—all of whom did well in the world, but with only one of whom we are concerned at present.

John was the second son and was born in 1761, at the Head Master's house in Little Dean's Yard, Westminster. When only eight years old he was sent to Westminster School, of which Dr. Samuel

Smith was then head, and Dr. Vincent was one of the teachers. It was from the latter—the author of "The History of the Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients in the Indian Ocean"—that Jack derived his ideas of naval glory. Among his schoolfellows were many lads who afterwards became famous—Home Popham, the Admiral and Marine Surveyor; Everard Home, the great physician; Charles Abbot, Speaker of the House of Commons, and afterwards created Lord Colchester; Henry Agar, Lord Clifden; George, afterwards Lord, Barrington; James Affleck, who died a Baronet and a General; Robert Hobart, fourth Earl of Buckinghamshire, and Governor of Madras; Spencer Madan; George Rice, afterwards Lord Dynevor, and his own brother-in-law; and a number of others more or less known to fame. With such companions, and in listening to the learned and brilliant company which used to gather in his father's house, the days of John Markham's boyhood were happily enough passed.

On the eleventh of March, 1775, little Jack Markham, now of the mature age of thirteen years and nine months, was entered as an officer in His Majesty's Navy. He joined the "Romney," then fitting out at Deptford, under the command of Captain the Honourable George Elphinstone, afterwards Admiral Lord Keith. Jack was always fortunate in his companions; his favourite messmate in the "Romney" was "the gallant good Riou," immortalised in Campbell's ballad. Their friendship endured until Riou's glorious death at Copenhagen.

Jack's first voyage was to Newfoundland, where the "Romney" remained cruising for two months, and then returned to Spithead with a convoy. While she was in port he was allowed a short holiday, part of which he spent with the young Princes at Buckingham Palace, then called the "Queen's House." The Prince of Wales, writing to Dr. Markham, said of this visit: "Dear Admiral went last Thursday. We may say to him what Virgil makes Apollo say to Ascanius :

"Macte novâ virtute puer :
Sic itur ad astra.

(Advance, illustrious youth ! increase in fame,
And wide from east to west extend thy name.)"

Captain Elphinstone was transferred to the "Perseus" in 1776, and Jack went with him. The "Perseus" was sent out to New York with a convoy of eighteen merchantmen, the seas then swarming with American privateers. The great War of

Independence was now going on. Convoying a fleet of merchantmen across the Atlantic was then an exciting and an anxious task, and the "Perseus" had her share of the fun. First a rebel sloop-of-war was captured, and then a schooner was taken. To his pride and delight Jack was sent, with a crew of four men, to take charge of this last prize, and he brought her safely into New York harbour. There he fell in with his uncle, Enoch Markham, Colonel of the Forty-Sixth Regiment, who saw some hard service during the rebellion.

It provokes a natural smile nowadays to read of a child of fourteen commanding a prize of war, but our smile disappears very soon. After a year's cruising and chasing of privateers on the American coast, the "Perseus" joined a small squadron which was engaged in hunting pirates, and which in February, 1777, proceeded to the West Indies. There, off the Island of St. Eustatia, the "Perseus" overhauled and captured a privateer sloop carrying ten guns, eight swivels, and a crew of twenty-eight men. Jack was again put in charge, and shortly after parting company with the frigate, was chased by an enemy's cruiser. He crowded on all sail and triumphantly brought his charge into the English harbour at Antigua. There he heard that his father had been created Archbishop of York, and he was naturally elated with joyful pride.

Captain Elphinstone now changed into the "Pearl," one of the finest frigates in the navy, and was employed in surveys at the mouth of the Delaware—Jack still with him. In a few months they both returned to the "Perseus," which vessel went to cruise off the coast of the Carolinas. There, during very dirty weather, a large merchant vessel was sighted, chased, and captured. All the crew, saving four American-Frenchmen, who were left to help in working her, were taken off, and Jack was clapped on board with four men and a boy from the "Perseus." A gale was gathering, and there was just time to tell him to make the best of his way to an English port. He was now barely sixteen. The gale came on with violence, the prize sprang a leak, and became waterlogged. His English crew, thinking all was up, became insubordinate, seized upon a cask of spirits, and drank themselves into a state of insensibility.

Jack was at the helm, and the boy was

asleep. This was too good an opportunity for the Frenchmen to lose, and they determined to regain the ship. One took a musket, another a cutlass, the others got handspikes, and together they rushed on Jack. They had mistaken their man—or boy. Jack, if young, was active. He jumped quickly aside, seized an iron pump-handle, felled the man with the musket, disabled the man with the cutlass, and drove the other two under hatches, which he smartly battened down. The boy, awakened by the noise, came to his help, and the two wounded men on deck were secured. Thus he remained in command of a sinking vessel, four prisoners, a drunken crew, and one boy. When the men came to their senses a thorough examination was made of the vessel, which they found to be full of stores and tobacco, and that she could not sink. They all had a hard time of it, before a passing vessel rescued them, and so many months elapsed before Jack landed in England, that his friends had put on mourning, believing him to be dead. It was a happy reunion, and the plucky young middy had again a well-deserved holiday. We cease to smile now at the boy-commander.

Jack's next cruise was in the "Roebuck," under the command of Sir Andrew Hamond—a gallant captain, knighted for his services during this war. Jack was now promoted to be Acting Lieutenant.

After a nine weeks' passage to New York, the "Roebuck" joined the fleet of Admiral Arbuthnot on an expedition to South Carolina. The object was to attack the strongly-fortified city of Charleston, and a number of troops were landed at the mouth of the Eusto River, with a naval brigade under Jack's old captain, Elphinstone. The "Roebuck"—on board which Admiral Arbuthnot now hoisted his flag—accompanied by the "Renown" and the "Romulus," lightened of guns, water, and provisions, crossed the bar to attack nine war-vessels which the enemy had inside. These were withdrawn up the river to Charleston, and there sunk to block the passage. But the "Roebuck" pushed on, passed Fort Moultrie under a heavy fire, and landed men to attack the fort, which then surrendered. Charleston surrendered a few days later, and very soon afterwards the whole of South Carolina was taken by Lord Cornwallis's army.

Markham did such good service in this

affair that he was promoted to be First Lieutenant of the "Roe buck," and he shared in the thanks voted by both Houses of Parliament to the officers and men engaged. Returning to New York, the "Roe buck" cruised for a time off Rhode Island, and early in 1781 returned to England.

But Markham was then in charge of the rebel prize-frigate, and after disposing of her he joined the "Royal Oak," and went on a cruise to Nova Scotia. There he was selected for duty on board of the "London," the flag-ship of Admiral Graves. Meanwhile the French had joined the rebels in an attempt to root out Lord Cornwallis from South Carolina, and news arrived that the French Admiral, De Grasse, with twenty-four sail of the line, was making for Chesapeake Bay. Thither the combined fleets of Hood and Graves—in all nineteen sail—followed, and sighted the enemy on the fifth of September, 1781.

The French fleet weighed, battle was at once opened, and a good deal of damage was done on both sides without any decisive result. The "London" was in the thick of it, and was so much cut up that she had to return a few days afterwards to New York to refit. Markham also distinguished himself in this action.

Meanwhile things were in a very disturbed state at home. While Jack was at New York, the Gordon riots were taking place in England, his father's house was attacked, and the lives of all the family were in great jeopardy. He received a long letter from the Archbishop telling him of all the stirring events, and of their escape from the imminent peril they had been in.

In January, 1782, Jack was appointed to the "Hinchinbroke" as Lieutenant-commanding, and was sent to cruise off Jamaica to protect trade. In March he was given charge of the fire-ship, "Volcano," and he missed being with Sir George Rodney in the memorable action which established our supremacy in the West Indies, and led to peace being declared between France and England.

In May he received the command of H.M. sloop "Zebra," with orders to cruise off Cape Tiburon. There he had an unfortunate encounter with a vessel which would not show her colours until he fired. She then turned out to be a truce-vessel, with prisoners for exchange. The French Lieutenant in charge professed that the

fault was his, and assured Markham that no blame attached to the latter. Yet on arrival at Port Royal, the Frenchman laid a charge against Markham of wilfully firing on a flag-of-truce and defenceless men. A court-martial followed, and on the false swearing of the French witnesses, Jack was found guilty and dismissed the service.

This was a great blow, but Jack was not the man to submit tamely to injustice, and he was backed by Sir George Rodney, who highly disapproved of the sentence. He returned to England, laid his case before the King, who referred it to Lord Keppel, First Lord of the Admiralty, and the end was that an Order in Council reinstated Jack in the service. He was at once promoted to be Post-Captain, received half-pay for the time he had been out of the service, and then, after a short command, was granted six months' leave on half-pay. The unjust sentence thus became a windfall to him, and it further made him many warm friends who resented the treatment he had received.

When in 1783 Jack, now Captain, Markham commissioned the "Sphynx," he was just twenty-two years old. The American War was over and peace ensued for ten years. For the first three years he was cruising in the Mediterranean, and for a time was second officer at Gibraltar, a position of some responsibility. In October, 1786, the "Sphynx" returned to England to be paid off, and Jack, now in his twenty-fifth year, had a term of six years ashore. This long holiday he spent happily among his many friends, and in making lengthened tours on the Continent—one of them being with Lord Wycombe, through Norway, Sweden, and Russia. He also made himself useful at home in connection with the Naval Club, and organised the formation of a fund for the relief of the widows and orphans of members. He also made a trip to Canada and to the States to look after some land in which his father was interested.

On the first of February, 1793, began the great war with France. As we would expect, Captain Markham was one of the first to apply for employment, and in a short time he was commissioned to a fine frigate called the "Blonde," then fitting out at Deptford. The "Blonde" was at first employed as a convoy to merchant traders for Holland, and then she was ordered to join Sir John Jervis—our famous Lord St. Vincent—in his expedition to the French West Indies.

Captain Markham took part in the capture of Martinique, and was sent home with the news, which caused great rejoicing, and evoked the thanks of both Houses of Parliament. Thereafter the "Blonde" joined the Channel Fleet under Lord Howe, and took part in the memorable chase of the great French fleet, which received a tolerable pounding from Lord Howe off Ushant.

Dissatisfied with the secondary place he had to take with a frigate in a great fight, he applied for, and in August of this year obtained, command of a seventy-four-gun line-of-battle-ship, the "Hannibal." With her he was sent off again to the West Indies in Rear-Admiral Colpoys' squadron. On the passage two French frigates were taken, one by the "Hannibal" alone, with a good slice of prize-money to the share of our hero.

This West Indies expedition was one of the great follies of the Great War. The English Government sent a handful of eight hundred and seventy men to conquer San Domingo, defended by six thousand picked French troops and fifteen thousand acclimatised militia. For many dreary months the hopeless struggle went on. The fever was even a greater foe than the French, and the mortality was fearful. In this wretched affair Jack's brother David, a Captain in the Twentieth Regiment, was killed when gallantly leading an attack on one of the forts. This was a terrible grief to Jack, and the whole employment at this time was a heart-break to him. The war-vessels had to remain in port to aid the inadequate land forces, for the drafts sent from England from time to time did not replace the removals by yellow fever. Scurvy broke out in the ships, and the crew of the "Hannibal," in spite of the ceaseless attention and anxious care of her commander, suffered severely. Finally, Jack himself broke down and was sent home invalided. This was his darkest term of service, and his saddest home-coming.

He now had a spell of a year ashore, and during that time was married to Maria Rice, sister of his old schoolfellow, George Talbot Rice, now Lord Dynevor. Maria Rice was a bright, graceful, accomplished young lady, full of health and spirits, a great reader, but also a great walker; full of breezy sunshine, and the very model of a sailor's wife. Some pleasant months were occupied in visiting various friends, and then Captain Jack was commissioned

to H.M.S. "Centaur." His principal duty, while this vessel was fitting out, was sitting on courts-martial in connection with the Mutiny at the Nore. This over, he was sent with his fine new seventy-four-gun ship to cruise off the south coast of Ireland, to look out for the then expected French invaders. Needless to say, he did not find any, but he found some of his grandfather's old friends, and he had plenty of practice in seamanship during a stormy winter. In April, 1798, he was ordered to join Lord St. Vincent's fleet off Cadiz. Here he had some disagreement with the gallant Admiral—who could be very dictatorial and unpleasant when he chose—concerning the sanitary arrangements of the "Centaur"; but Jack, while he bowed to authority, upheld his own opinion, and in doing so gained the respect of St. Vincent. The two afterwards became firm friends and allies.

Meanwhile, however, an expedition was ordered to Minorca, and the "Centaur" formed part of it. The whole of the next year was employed in chasing, and in active encounters with, the French in the Mediterranean; and later with the Channel Fleet, of which Lord St. Vincent, though very ill, took command at the urgent request of Government, for the more effectual blockade of Brest.

We must shorten our story, however. The Channel service was anxious and rough work, and it was aggravated by an outbreak of scurvy in the fleet. Finally, in February, 1801, Lord St. Vincent resigned his command in order to take the office of First Lord of the Admiralty in Mr. Addington's Ministry, and he invited Captains Trowbridge and Markham, as the two of whom, by close observation, he had formed the highest opinion for judgement and ability, to join the Board as Naval Lords.

Thus, early in 1801, Captain Markham retired from the sea after twenty-six years in the navy and twenty years of varied active service. He was now forty years of age, and in due time he was gazetted Rear-Admiral, Vice-Admiral, and Admiral.

The remainder of Admiral Markham's life was spent in legislative and administration work, and he was especially associated with Lord St. Vincent in reforming the service and overhauling the dockyards. It was Markham who re-organised the Hydrographic Department, who introduced teak timber into the British Navy, and did much other useful work

down to his death in 1827. But we do not dwell on his career as a public servant, as our object was merely to present a picture of a gallant British sailor in one of the most stirring periods of our naval history.

THE WOUND.

FLING the gay stuffs above it,
The scar that the wound has left ;
Hide it with glowing flowers,
With fingers quick and deft ;
Speak as if never a weapon,
Held in a reckless hand,
Had struck a blow so cruel ;
The world will understand.

The world will look and lightly
Say it is all forgot ;
The sneer, the lie, the treason
Are all as they were not.
Change is the law of Nature,
And love, and faith, and trust
Are things too fair and dainty
To tread life's common dust.

Only when all is over,
The curtain drawn o'er the play ;
When the voice has hushed its pleading,
The smile has died away ;
When the corpse is decked for burial,
And things show as they are,
Deep, red and angry, as at first,
I think they'll find the scar.

WINTER LIFE IN COPENHAGEN.

IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

DENMARK is not a country to visit in winter unless you are fond of a good deal of snow, a low thermometer, and wintry landscapes.

I thought I was fond of these three things; but, all the same, I did not like to form my first impression of Copenhagen at two o'clock in the morning, after a painful passage of the Great Belt—we were four hours late in crossing—and in a snow-storm which, judging from the state of the streets, had already raged some time.

We were a party of about a hundred travellers from the South. The ice in the Belts had got so severe as to threaten Denmark with a general stoppage of communication in its most important part. Instead of a ferry once every three or four hours across the Great Belt, it was all they could do to send the strong ice-boat from Fyen to Zealand once a day. Hence the massing of impatient travellers at the ferry ports, and a complete disorganisation of train services.

It had been a fine experience in its way —this passage of the fifteen or sixteen miles of the Great Belt. The ice was thick nearly everywhere in the journey. It was

a pitchy night, and quite out of the question for the captain to strike the exact route he had made that morning in his voyage from Zealand to Fyen. He had then, of course, broken a passage in the ice, and if we could have retraced our steps things might have been easier for us. But scarcely had we started at seven o'clock when the snow whirled upon us from the north, and it soon obliterated the marks of broken ice, which would also, with the aid of the boat's lamps and clever steering, have served us in our return passage.

Now and then we had come to a dead stop. The floes in front were not to be overcome without repeated efforts. The more determined of us passengers stayed on deck in our furs and ulsters to see how matters were likely to go. It was worth while doing so for the sake of the vigorous sensations we enjoyed. The boat went on when it could, with a melancholy crunching and grinding of the ice; and when from slow our pace descended to slower, and then to absolute inactivity, it was essential to put the engines astern without loss of time, lest the disturbed ice should pack around us in our trouble like wolves about a disabled horse, and so bind us hard and fast—for an indefinite time.

For an hour it was very tedious work—quite as much backward as forward movement, it seemed. Then, however, we had got more into the middle of the sound, where the ice had not, thanks to the Belt currents, yet had time to become so formidable thick. Even here, however, we were sliding on ice rather than steaming through water. The weighty iron bows of the boat were forced well up by the massing of luggage and ballast in the after-part. The screw aft thus lay deep in the water, out of danger from the floes, which would else soon have broken it; while the tremendous bows, gliding ahead slowly but surely, fractured a channel for us, through which we crawled to our destination.

And so, instead of coming to Copenhagen at the decent hour of ten, we were set on our feet in its deserted streets—splendid wide thoroughfares, some of them—at the dismal hour of two.

Happily, it was not necessary to trouble about luggage. For my part, I just walked out into the snow and piercing air, and entered the first hotel which showed signs of a night porter. The man gaped, took a candle, and led me to my room. One does not usually in the North, in winter, occupy unwarmed apartments. For once in a

way, however, I endured the chilly atmosphere on this third floor, and it was not long ere agreeable slumber came to me.

The next day broke cold and bright. From my bedroom window I could see hundreds of men with broad wooden shovels casting the snow into heaps. The January sun gleamed on the blood-red new buildings opposite the "Hotel Dagmar." Below, tramcars were wending their way up and down the spacious street. Above, the lines of telegraph and telephone wires stretched darkly from housetop to housetop.

There was no doubting that I was in a Capital town.

Still less was it possible to doubt it when I ate my breakfast lower in the hotel in a large room of marble columns, gilding and mirrors, with the inevitable German waiter in swallow-tails, talking an English that the Englishman would do better to guess at than attempt to understand methodically.

There were about thirty degrees of frost in the air when I went out to take stock of Denmark's metropolis. Under these circumstances it is vastly more pleasant to go afoot through a strange town than to take conveyance of any kind. Besides, nothing is so educative, in its way, as getting lost in a labyrinth of streets and squares, the relative position of which you wish to understand.

I sought to go due north, in which direction I believed Copenhagen's chief buildings lay. I succeeded in confusing myself very soon in a series of small streets, the houses of which seemed all devoted to the provision of "Breakfasts" and "Coffee." I was in fact in the neighbourhood of the Christianshavn Docks. The frozen canals soon told me this much.

Steamers, three masted barques, and innumerable smaller ships and fishing-boats were all welded together in the ice of the main channels of the harbour. It was a pretty sight, with the frosty red sun on the horizon. Notice boards were stuck about the harbour telling where the ice was trustworthy, and where it was dangerous. But the continuance of the frost had made these posts obsolete. Mariners and others, bulkily wrapped in woollens, were treading to and fro among the irregular ice floes, regardless of the possibilities of immersion.

Here a fisherman might be seen who was not to be dissuaded from his vocation by Jack Frost. He could not go out upon

the Baltic in his clumsy little green boat, but he still meant to earn his livelihood. He had, therefore, cut a hole in the ice, and thence he ladled out dabs and soles and other fish with such ease and in such numbers, that it seemed as if, for his pocket's sake, he might well pray for January weather all the year round. In fact, however, scarcely one fish in five was saleable. The cold had played havoc with them as well as with the dock labourers, the postal deliveries, the shipping owners, and the capital's supply of coal. For every marketable fish thus netted to the surface, four or five were promptly rejected and returned to the icy deep, to beguile the next fisherman who indulged in a little wintry angling in the same place.

It was odd, too, to see the multitude of sea-birds as well as ubiquitous sparrows that amused themselves on the ice all among the shipping. They seemed as tame as house cats. Indeed it were hard for them otherwise. With the sound between Denmark and Sweden even faster than the Great Belt, the former had scant chances of a dinner of fish of the conventional kind. They had thus habituated themselves to the new state of affairs. The very boldest of them trod the decks of the harbour craft, and openly declared that they expected to be fed by man. The others played the excellent part of scavengers on the ice. For these there was not a little work, if they were to be consistent scavengers. The offal and nasty rubbish of all kinds cast from the vessels on to the ice was bad enough to see. Much of the refuse was of a kind that even the foulest feeding vulture would have turned up his beak at.

From the docks I at length broke into the heart of the town proper, by a canal-side with quaint old gabled red houses, such as one sees in northern towns on the Continent, but in England nowhere. A stately Grecian temple was in front, with a green dome from which the snow had largely departed. The contrast between this building, with its classical portico and pediment, and the old burgher houses adjacent was keen. And yet really it was not a whit more keen than the contrast between the glowing works of the sculptor to whom it is dedicated, and the frigid surroundings of the works themselves. This Grecian temple is the Thorvaldsen Museum—the thing best worth seeing in Europe, north of the Vatican.

For the moment, however, I neglected Thorvaldsen, reserving the joy as a schoolboy keeps his comfits.

I passed a Royal statue of bronze, snow-decked; then a Royal palace, more than half in ruins; then another canal; a delightful blood-red range of quaint buildings more than two centuries old, though apparently new as hawthorn blossom, and with a unique tower of twisted dragons, their tails tapering skywards; and so into a market square, where a number of old dames were sitting demurely before little tables of frozen fish, flesh, and fowl, as if they held the thermometer in scorn.

Here, among these stiff eels—I could have used one as a walking-stick—and wooden hens, was a charming touch or two of colour. There were small portable hothouses in the market-place, and from their dewy panes, hyacinths, lilies of the valley, sulphur-hued roses, and other tenderly-nurtured flowers looked forth into the frosty air. It were cruel indeed, it seemed to me, to buy these pretty gems for instant execution. If my Danish had not been so lamentably halting, I would have said as much to the flower merchant when he invited me to buy. But he would hardly have sympathised with my fancy.

From the market I struck Ostergade, the Regent Street of Copenhagen, and was instantly convinced that the Danish ladies are first in Europe for complexions. Their frosted cheeks seemed to warm the thoroughfare, and there was the sparkle of exuberant health in most eyes. Moreover, how admirably do furs enhance a woman's beauty! It seems easy for a lady in furs to appear graceful.

I suppose in the North fur coats and fur jackets are as needful as dress-suits. And one is glad of it. Nothing in the way of raiment has a better appearance. The railway officials, even though they may wear but astrachan, have a lordly look, that they owe quite as much to their apparel as to their impressive physique, and their inner pride in being able to write themselves down as Government employés. The commercial traveller in catskin and mink inspires reverence; while as for sables, bearskin, and seal, they make robes for gods, and would dignify even the most degraded specimens of humanity.

Hence, no doubt, quite as much as because of their warmth and costliness when new, the extraordinary supply of

second-hand furs in the shop windows of Ostergade. One would as soon think of wearing ordinary second-hand clothes as being fitted with one's neighbour's extracted teeth. The same repugnance is not felt for furs that have passed from their first possessor. These are in the like case with diamonds and rubies of price. They can be reset, and it is as if you, their latest owner, then had them first-hand from Nature, with all their charms untarnished.

After the furs the multitude of cigar shops were noticeable. The Danes are great smokers. Cigars are cheap in the land. You do not here, as in Spain, see venerable dames openly enjoying the dear nicotine; but it is the commonest thing in the world to meet a group of schoolboys, not much more than just in their teens, all sucking at cigars while they con their Latin grammars. One bright-looking little fellow whom I later met in the train with a Copenhagen Havana between his lips and a geography manual on his knees, told me he was but eleven. I do not know whether his precocious manners were due to his early introduction to tobacco. Certainly, however, this lad was a wonder of intelligence, self-possession, and politeness. We are told in England and elsewhere that it is extremely bad to smoke until we are quite mature men. Perhaps it is. But the injuriousness of the habit thus early fostered does not seem to affect the Danish constitution as, according to the doctors, it affects us.

And yet to Denmark's credit it must be said that it is not difficult for a person who abhors tobacco to live comfortably in the land. There are non-smoking carriages on the State railways, and the inhibitions are respected. Of course, too, there are also ladies' cars. You are not permitted to smoke in the better class waiting-rooms at the stations, and in the ladies' cafés—a feature of Scandinavia—you are again, equally of course, secure from the intrusive weed. Even in the vestibules of the theatres it is unlawful to light so much as a cigarette.

After its furs, and the tobacco shops, and the ladies' cheeks, Ostergade seemed to me mainly remarkable for its trying pavement. The Copenhagen authorities are commendably brisk in getting the snow removed from the streets almost ere it touches the ground. But they do not interfere with youthful sport in the matter of slides. A lad may polish a most

elegant stretch of pavement if he pleases, and no one says him nay. And then, when he is surfeited with sliding, he will have most diverting pastime—if he can spare the time for it—in watching the worthy Copenhagen adults of all classes capsize on the pavement he has transformed into a rink. I dare say there are many doctors at the head of Copenhagen municipal affairs. The winter can hardly fail to provide them with a rich harvest of fractured bones.

From Østergade I wandered into other streets, some attractive for their shops and some attractive for their buildings. I soon learnt that much margarine is consumed in Denmark. Perhaps the Danes cannot quite help themselves. We take so much of their butter from them that it may be we leave them to the mercy of the margarine makers of Odense and other towns. I also learnt that in Copenhagen it is much the vogue, as elsewhere, to collect foreign stamps; a surprising number of shops had sheets of these little labels in their windows. I do not profess to be an expert at philately, but some of these Copenhagen foreign stamps were the most audacious forgeries imaginable. I believe I could, with pen, ink, paper, pencil, and a common box of colours, have made more "lifelike" specimens myself. One thing I learnt: to wit, that their Majesties of Denmark are much in request of the photographers. It was, at least, interesting to see picture after picture of King Christian the Ninth and his Queen in the shop windows. They were shown seated at ease in their Palace salons and in other positions. I declare that, ere nightfall, I felt quite familiar with the Danish Royal Family.

In truth, King Christian and his Queen seem well to deserve these undoubted tokens of national affection. The King may not be the best extant specimen of a constitutional monarch; but, out of question, he has the welfare of Denmark and his people close at heart. The Radicals here have a great deal to say against the present system of kingly rule, but against the King personally, or about abuses in high places, little enough. As for the people of Denmark, what matters it to the majority of them whether they are despotically or constitutionally governed, so long as the rule is a just and benevolent one which maintains order? The Royal Family do not keep themselves aloof from the ignoble herd. Its youthful members

this very afternoon, for instance, were skating with hundreds of the children of citizens and others on the public ice of the town.

SOLITUDE—AND A CROWD.

ONE can scarcely conceive of any great work having ever been done in the midst of a crowd. A great building may, of course, be raised in the heart of a great city, right before the eyes of a great multitude of men; but the man who planned that building, who made of it a perfect whole before one brick was placed upon another, wrought in solitude, surely! A statesman may find it necessary, for reasons which are on the surface, to live, as much as possible, in a crowd, but when he desires to do any actual work, he gets as far away from a crowd as possible, to some place where solitude shall be his chief companion. A great fortune need not, necessarily, be a great work; but although it may, at first sight, seem strange, it is probable that the greatest fortunes have been made in solitude. Jay Gould, Vanderbilt, Astor, other of the American multi-millionaires, were notoriously solitary men. I saw, somewhere, that Baron Hirsch always prefaced his greatest coups by prolonged periods of solitary communion. I do not know if the statement proceeds from the financier's own lips, but the thing at least is possible.

No doubt there is such a thing as being alone in the centre of a crowd. "I never feel so much alone as when I am surrounded by a number of people;" that, or a similar observation, we all of us have heard. And probably most of us have a moment of self-absorption, even when we are in the gayest, most sympathetic company. I have heard men of business say that, when they desire privacy, to enable them to think out business details, they spend an evening at a theatre or a music-hall. This is like the tradesman who protested that he would not miss going to church on Sunday mornings for anything—if he did, he should get his accounts all wrong. Then, again, there is such a thing as the solitude of a great city; and it certainly is a fact that one may be as much alone in London as anywhere in the wide, wide world. But solitude of some sort one must have, if one is to do work of any kind worth doing.

Take, for instance, literary men—men

whose trade is that of the writer. How often do we encounter works of promise, instances of young authors who have started well, but who, having started, get no farther! One cause for this is, not impossibly, what is called society. It is often said that, to a "writing fellow," social success means literary success—that it is the literary man who moves in the "best" society who "gets on." I doubt it. That is, I do not doubt that the man who is seen everywhere may, therefore, "get work" of a kind; but that it is work of a kind I have no doubt whatever. A scribbler may, merely because of his social connections, achieve an income of a thousand, or even of two thousand a year, but that such an one would do good work I take leave to doubt. I am not for a moment suggesting such a patent absurdity as that, merely because a man is born the son of a Duke, or of a Marquis, or an Earl, he is, on that account, incapacitated from becoming a first-rate workman at any trade to which he chooses to turn his hands. I am simply questioning the possibility of a man being able to serve two masters. I say that I question if it is possible for a man to give enough of himself to society to entitle him to be called a social success, and, at the same time, to do good work in literature. It is no answer to point, for instance, to Sir Edward Hamley, to Kinglake, to Hayward, to Lady Brassey, to the long list of men and women who, while holding a recognised position in society, produced literary work which, of its kind, was very nearly as good as it could be. If anything, these persons prove the very point at which I am aiming. First of all, none of them can be fairly said to have achieved social elevation. They were born in the society in which they lived, and moved, and died—therefore none of their work was done before they received what is called social recognition. I would wager a large sum—if I had it—that, in society or out of it, their best work was done when, in some way or other, they had temporarily excluded themselves from society of any and every kind.

I am alluding to quite a different kind of thing. That was a very decent volume of verses which the Honourable Frank Singan published when he was at the University. He has never written a line, either in prose or verse, worth reading since. The reason, as I understand it, is simplicity itself. When he came down society took it into its head to make of

him a lion—and the Honourable Frank was smashed. Again, take young Slasher. He has done nothing above contempt since "The Kicker Kicked." Why? When he wrote that really clever work of fiction, he was a struggling usher in a country school. "The Kicker Kicked" caught on. His publisher gave him the run of his house—the entrée to a "social circle." The circle increased in circumference—it was joined to other circles. For the first time in his life Slasher found himself somebody, and he lost his head. In his struggles to retain, not the literary, but the social position he had gained, he came to grief. So far as one can judge from the stuff he has lately produced, he is destined to write pot-boilers—and poor pot-boilers at that—for the rest of his life. If he had never "entered society," if he had woed solitude, and kept out of the crowd, the highest positions in literature were within his reach.

Trollope tells us, in his autobiography, that he was amused by what some of the reviewers wrote of those of his novels of which the scene was laid in Barsetshire. These critics were so struck by the intimate knowledge which he showed of life in a cathedral city. How excellently he drew his Bishops and his Deans! What close studies he must have made of them in the flesh! Over this pronouncement of the pundits Trollope chuckles. He assures us that, before those tales were written, he had never met either a Bishop or a Dean, nor had he met, to his knowledge, any one who had. He knew nothing, practically, of a clergyman of any sort or kind; nor of life in a cathedral city either. He had drawn on his imagination, and on his imagination only, for every life that he had written.

It is universally recognised that the Barsetshire novels contain far and away the best work that Anthony Trollope ever did. Now, some of the wise inform us that, if a man desires to write a good novel, it is essential that he should only attempt to write of what he knows. How does this fit in with Trollope's declaration? Says Quilpen, when you ask him why he frequents five o'clock teas, and garden-parties, and "At homes," and musical evenings, and all the rest of it: "I get my materials from life. If I didn't see life, where should I get my materials?" I believe that many people excuse themselves for always keeping in a crowd, by the assertion that if they were

not actually, physically, bodily, "in the movement," as the slang has it, they would be out of it. It seems to me that these people—and Quilpen—are a little mistaken.

It would be an exaggeration to say that the less you know of a thing the better you can write of it; though, to a certain extent, even that is true. If you go, say, to a place for the first time in your life to-morrow, it is quite possible that you will be able to give us a better, a more piquant—in a sense, a more accurate—picture of it at the end of a week than at the end of a year. Because, in the one case, the impression will be fresh, and in the other, it will have become dulled by constant repetition. So, also, it is quite likely that you will be able to give us a better and a juster description of a person after a short acquaintance than after the acquaintance of a lifetime. Because, in the one case, your point of view will probably be an impartial one, you will at least see with unobscured eyes; while, in the other, with equal probability, the threads of your two lives will have become so interwoven, so entangled, that not only will impartiality be impossible, but, also, your eyes will have become obscured and dimmed; you will not see any one thing clearly because you see so many. In the great multitude of visions the sense of proportion is lost.

Although the thing must not be pushed too far—for instance, it would be rash to assert that a man is unfitted to write on the rudiments of the Latin grammar because he thinks in Hebrew and speaks in Greek—still, there is truth in the assertion that sometimes the less one knows of a thing the better one can write of it.

"Home-keeping youths have ever homely wits." There is truth, again, in this. I should be the last person to advise any one, in that sense, to keep at home. The individual who, having arrived at maturity, has never been more than fifty or a hundred miles away from the place of his birth is, surely, an individual to be pitied. It may be the fact that "a rolling stone gathers no moss," but, with Lord Dundreary, I should like to know what a stone wants with moss, anyhow. Is it not written somewhere that moss is a synonym of decay? It is certain that the man of average intelligence, who moves hither and thither, in all the highways and byways of the world, does not become mossgrown, and all the better. No, let every man, and every

woman, too, see as much of the world as he or she can; there is a good deal in the world worth seeing, though the oldest inhabitant of Little Pedlington may scarcely think it. But it by no means follows that because one travels, one therefore lives in crowds; the greatest travellers are often the most solitary of beings.

"How much the travelled fool excels the fool who stays at home." I have no reference at hand, but is it not something like that which Cowper says? One would remark, first, that Cowper's was hardly the sort of life one would desire to emulate; certainly he was no great traveller. And, secondly, even he seems to allow that the travelled fool excels the fool who stays at home. And, surely, there is no better recipe for the sharpening even of the dullest wits than the attrition which is inseparable from travel.

The mistake which the man makes who moves in what is called "society," is, that he thinks that, because he moves in society, he therefore, of necessity, sees the world. There is, no doubt, society and society. But society, even at its best, is but a coterie, or collection of coteries, of cliques. Every society has its standards, just as much as Little Pedlington has. You are either of it or not of it; this applies to the "society" of Seven Dials just as much as it applies to the "society" of which so much has been lately written in the magazines. If you are in it, you must obey its rules—and very absurd many of its rules are, just as absurd as the standard of conduct which obtains in Little Pedlington. If you do not obey its rules, you are out of it—you are, as the phrase puts it, "outside the pale of society." No society can be cosmopolitan; the two words are in absolute opposition. For this very simple reason, that the genuine cosmopolitan is not only a man who is at home in every phase of life, but, above all, he is a man who lives just what life he pleases. The life of a man who is in society must, to a greater or less extent, be fettered by the laws of the society, the clique, the set, to which he belongs. And, therefore, it comes to this, that the man who is a member, really and truly an active member, of any sort of society you please—who, that is, lives, moves, and has his being in it—is, necessarily, not a citizen of the world, but only of a fragment of the world, and oftentimes of an infinitesimal fragment, too.

Let a man or a woman, I repeat, see as much of the world as he or she can; but,

unless the pair of them intend to fritter their lives away, let them keep out of the crowd, or, if they must be in it, as some of us must, at least let them not be of it. But, Indeed, the advice is superfluous, because the man who does not propose to fritter his life away will take great care that he does not allow himself to become simply one of a crowd, whether the crowd be large or small.

I do not wish to dogmatise—very much the other way. About tastes there is no disputing, and I, for one, have certainly no desire to inaugurate a disputation. If Perkins is ambitious for social success; if he thinks that the only thing worth climbing is the social ladder; if he wishes to gain the entrée of Lady A.'s house, and then of the Countess of B.'s, and then of the Marchioness of C.'s, and then of the Duchess of D.'s, until, step by step, he reaches the august precincts of Royalty itself, and becomes actually "persona grata" with Princes, so be it. I am not suggesting, even by inference, that Perkins's ambition may not be at least as worthy as either yours or mine. But I do say this, that I conceive that it is hardly possible that Perkins proposes to leave behind him any, even the faintest, mark upon the world—any work, of any sort or kind, that will endure. There are some who love work merely for the work's sake, queer though it may seem. And I would respectfully hint that those persons would hardly be wise in emulating Perkins.

Not that a worker need necessarily shut himself off—I am assuming the masculine gender—from the society of his fellow-men, or women. But this he must be: he must be in a position to shut himself from their society when he pleases. He must be, so far, free. To paraphrase, I hope not improperly, the line in the well-known hymn—not to be able to obtain solitude when I desired it, "that would be hell for me." How many persons, poets, divines, philosophers, have given us their ideas of hell! One set of religionists conceive of it as a region of everlasting fire. The Esquimaux think of it as a region of eternal cold. In all sobriety I think that my idea of an inferno would scarcely be the mighty Florentine's—it would be a place in which one would be, for ever and ever, in the centre of a gaping, chattering crowd, in which one could never, never be alone.

Possibly it is a question of temperament, but I, for one, would never like to be a King or Queen, if for one thing only,

because of the "fierce light which beats upon the throne." People cavil at our own Queen because, for so many years, she has come so little into the crowd—society. I, the humblest of her subjects, would—if the humblest of her subjects might so far presume—on that point shake hands with her. Her love of privacy, to me, is Nature's first and chiefest law. I can well understand her saying: "If I cannot have my privacy when I wish and as I wish, I will have nothing." I know, in her place, I should be of the same mind.

Who has not suffered from the incursions of his friends? I know a man who changes his dwelling-place every few months, and for this cause: he says that when he has lived in a place a short time he begins to know people, so he goes. It sounds churlish, but I am not sure that I do not envy that man because he is in a position which enables him to shift his tent at his own sweet will and pleasure. He tells me that some time ago he was in a certain watering-place, and very comfortable he was. You cannot be in a place without knowing people, so he says, and the acquaintance of some very nice people he quickly made. Particularly of two or three men, some of the very nicest fellows he ever met, only, unfortunately, they had nothing to do with their time, except kill it. Unfortunately, as not seldom is the case with men in their position, they could not be made to understand that he could have anything else to do with his time either. They came in upon him at all hours of the day. They wanted him to play cricket, football, tennis, cards, billiards, and all manner of games. They wanted him to walk, to ride, to drive, to row, to shoot, to fish. If they wanted him for nothing else, then they wanted him to talk to, and to talk to them. The man in question is the mildest-mannered man that ever breathed; so far from cutting a throat, he would not, rudely, hurt the proverbial fly. He assures me—and from my own experience in similar situations I find no difficulty in accepting his assurance—that it was quite impossible, without making himself positively unpleasant, to get these gentlemen to understand that there were times and seasons in which he preferred his own society; so he left that watering-place. What is more, he informs me that he has got himself in the same quandary in the place where he is now, so he is going to leave that too.

Men are gregarious animals. Some

more so than others ; all now and then. It is the latter class who are the sufferers. Brown plants himself in a country village, say, in the wilds of Andalusia, or of Brittany, as I have done. He wishes to work, and he works. But man is not made to live by work alone. He grows fusty, incapable of work, as Brown is well aware. They tell us that every disease has its remedy, if you can only find it. Brown knows very well, when he suffers from incapacity to work, what is the proper remedy—it is communion with his fellow-men. With a view of applying the proper remedy, he makes the acquaintance of the village inn-keeper ; of such of the villagers as frequent his house ; perhaps, if Brown is wise, of the local curé ; by degrees, of some of the inhabitants of the country-side. If the village is a Breton village, it is ten to one that there is a fellow-countryman not far away, if there are not two or three. Brown makes the acquaintance of the fellow-countryman, or of the two or three. In a marvellously short space of time he finds that he knows all the country-side, that he has made a too liberal use of his own remedy. Because, unless he is the most exceptionally fortunate of Browns, there is sure to be at least one person among his new acquaintance, if there is not more than one, who wants to play when Brown would like to work, and who, to all practical intents and purposes—so contagious is the spirit of idleness!—insists on making Brown his playfellow. So, presently, and perhaps all too soon, the atmosphere of that village becomes too highly rarefied to suit Brown's constitution.

It seems, at first sight, curious that, for a man in Brown's position, there should, practically, be no choice but a choice of extremes ; that there should be nothing between knowing too many people and knowing none. Yet, if you enquire into the matter a little closely, you will find that the thing is not so curious as it seems. Selfishness is at the root of it. We all are selfish—I know I am—and I am not so sure that selfishness, at any rate in some of its forms, is quite so egregious a vice as the common conversation of the world supposes. But that is apart from the question.

Brown is selfish ; and not only is Brown selfish, but the entire population of that Breton village is selfish. You may be sure of it, because, as I say again, we all are. Brown wants his way, and every creature he encounters wants his way too. It is plain

to Brown that it is impossible for him to yield—for him to do so might be to inflict upon himself an irreparable injury. Exactly the same thing is equally evident to all the other folks as well. And this is the reason why—for the village may stand for the world—those men who are only occasionally gregarious have only a choice between extremes, why they must either know too many people, or else know none. Because directly a man makes an acquaintance, he tacitly consents, while he continues that acquaintance, to adapt himself to his acquaintance. If Jones wishes to make Smith's acquaintance, it would scarcely do for him to preface the expression of his wish by a declaration that he expects Smith at all times, and in all seasons, to adapt himself to his convenience, and that he—Jones—never intends, under any circumstances, to adapt himself to Smith's. If Jones did venture on such a declaration, the odds would be very considerable against the acquaintance ever being made. One acquaintance, therefore, presupposes a voluntary, and possibly even pleasurable relinquishment of, very probably, an appreciable portion of our liberty ; and it thus follows, as the night the day, that the more we multiply our acquaintance, the less liberty we leave ourselves. As a man advances in years and—for once in a way, we will take it for granted as a natural corollary—in knowledge of life, the more clearly he realises that in those seasons in which he desires to be a free-man, and to do serious, honest work of any sort or kind, there is for him no choice between knowing too many people and knowing none.

I sometimes hear people say—I trust I may offend no sensitive susceptibilities when I add that they are, for the most part, women—"I cannot endure my own society." Poor creatures ! One must be forgiven for suspecting that, if such is the case, other people will be able to endure very little of their society either. Surely men and women, to be worth their salt, must, to a great extent, be sufficient unto themselves. We are born alone, we must die alone ; if, during our lifetime, we can never endure to be alone, what invertebrate creatures we must be ! Philosophers inform us that, in the deepest sense, we, all of us, always are alone, and, in their sense, the thing is true. It was written up in the temple, "Know thyself !" Well, although a man may not know himself, it is absolutely certain that he knows himself

much better than anybody else ever will or ever can do. We must have all of us been startled, even when in the company of our nearest and our dearest, to find in certain crises of our lives, in certain of our moods and phases, how utterly we have been misunderstood, how completely we have been in touch only with ourselves, how hopelessly we have been alone. But that is not the sort of loneliness Miss Mixer has in her mind when she exclaims : "I cannot endure my own society." She means that she is so resourceless in herself ; so destitute of imagination ; so incapable of standing erect unsupported ; that if she cannot find others like herself to help hold her up, and to help to hold each other up, she will be unable to hide, even from herself, the consciousness of what sort of thing she is. Miss Mixer is by no means alone in her exclamation. Mr. Larkins chimes in, and all the world knows that one would have to have, not nine, but at least ninety Larkinses before one even began to have the making of a man. That is exactly it. When one comes to consider practically the question of solitude, or a crowd, one is confronted by the fact that a largely preponderating proportion of the constituents which go to the making of a crowd consists of the Mixers and the Larkinses.

MY COUSIN COLAS.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

We folk of the village of Frahan in the Belgian Ardennes are a stay-at-home race. We never think of going further than to Sedan on the one side, or Bouillon on the other. We have no reason to travel, and no wish to find a reason. Monsieur le Doyen Hiernaux—who was a learned man, and likely to be right—used to say that this trait in our character was due to the situation of our village, which lies buried in a nook whence we see no distant horizon to tempt us to wander. All around, whichever way we look, are steep wooded hills, girdling the rocky, spur-like ridge at the end of which Frahan is built. Round this spur, and just beneath the encircling hills, the River Semois makes a long, narrow loop. Between the village and the river is a belt of meadow-land, chequered by plots of corn and tobacco plant, while, on the other side of the shallow, hasty current, the slatey rocks, partly hidden by trees, rise precipitously, and the only paths

up them are a stiff climb for any but well-seasoned legs and lungs.

The only person in Frahan, however, who found the path trying was Monsieur le Doyen Hiernaux, who had come back from Brussels—a retired seminary Professor—to spend his old age and economise his pension in his native place. Of course he had been a climber in his youth, but during his long absence he had changed in more ways than one—at least so said my father, who was some kin to him, and who remembered him from old times.

When Monsieur le Doyen had settled down among us, time seemed to hang heavy on his hands. He worked in his garden and tended his bees, and gave the curé what help he could, but still he missed his old occupation of schoolmastering, which had become a sort of second nature to him.

"Ab, Dufêne," he called one evening to my father, as we passed his garden wall on our way home from work. "Ab, Dufêne, I want a few minutes' talk with you, or rather with that big lad of yours. I have a plan which I want to propose to you—and to him."

"At your service, Monsieur le Doyen," said my father, in the respectful tone he always used to his learned kinsman ; and I, too, was glad of an excuse to stand at the garden gate for a few minutes—for was it not possible, as we talked to the Doyen, that we might catch a glimpse of his niece, Clémence Servais, who kept his house for him ?

"Yes," continued the old man, nodding to me, "I have a plan in my head concerning you, mon ami. I dare say," and he smiled good-naturedly, "you do not make much use of the little knowledge you picked up at school. What do you say to coming and brushing up your brains once or twice a week with my assistance, and learning to take an interest in something beyond your day's work or your day's play ?"

My father glanced at me doubtfully ; he knew that book-learning was not much in my line.

"You are very kind, Monsieur le Doyen," he began, while I blushed and stood silent, "but I fear—"

"Wait a moment," interrupted the old man gently. "Let the lad speak for himself. I fancy he is going to fall in with my plan."

I grew redder still. He was right, but if he were so shrewd at guessing my

unspoken words, would he not also guess the motive which prompted them; moreover, what would my father think of the sudden change in my tastes? It required all my courage to stammer awkwardly that "If Monsieur le Doyen did not think me too much of a dunce, I should like it very much."

"I thought so," he replied, with a cheery little air of triumph, "and perhaps you will like it better still when I tell you that you are to have a fellow-pupil. I have already made the same offer to your cousin, the other Colas Dufêne. He accepted at once. He said nothing about being a dunce."

"He isn't a dunce," I began eagerly, for I had a wonderful opinion of my cousin Colas, which, however, my father did not share.

"No, he isn't a dunce," he said, shaking his head, "but he won't be a steady pupil either."

The old priest smiled again.

"I know all about that," he said; "but dear me, Dufêne, if you knew as much about lads as a long experience has taught me, you would know that the madcaps are not the worst sort."

"I say nothing about the worst sort," persisted my father. "I only say that I'm glad my Colas isn't like him."

"But he is like him," rejoined the other, still smiling. "The two might be twin brothers, as their two fathers are."

"That's as it may be," said my father. "Thank goodness it's but an outward likeness. If my lad got into the scrapes my nephew gets into, and played the fool in the workshop as continually, it'd be a sore grief to me."

"Come, come," interrupted Monsieur le Doyen; "you're too h'rd on him. I call him a nice, open-hear'ed lad; fond of a bit of mischief, perhaps, but good grit after all. I want to help him to spend his leisure hours better, and you may take my word for it he will turn out well."

"I hope he may," returned my father grimly; "but I've known him longer than you, and I think otherwise."

"Colas," said my father, as we walked homeward, "I'd no notion you'd accept an offer of that sort so quick out of hand. Had you heard aught of it from your cousin beforehand?"

"Nay," I said, "that was the first word I have heard, and I should have said yes all the same, even if Colas had not been mixed up with it at all."

Which was quite true, for the tree of knowledge, of which Monsieur le Doyen offered me to eat, tempted me only for the sake of Clémence Servais.

Clémence was not of our village; she had come from Brussels with Monsieur le Doyen to keep his house, and she differed from any girl I had ever seen in more ways than I could reckon. Her very speech was unlike ours, and when we spoke our patois she did not understand us. She was small and slightly built, with delicate features and a gentle voice; but when I knew her better, I found that her will was as the will of a strong man, and that her heart was as steadfast as the rocks on which our village stood. She always seemed to me far, far above me; yet I loved her so dearly, that for her sake I would have done anything, not to speak of so small a matter as to become the fellow-pupil of my cousin Colas Dufêne, and to receive instruction from so kind-hearted an old man as Monsieur le Doyen. But I was barely nineteen, and I knew that at present there could be no talk of my wooing or wedding; so I bided my time, and kept my love a secret from every one, even from Colas, who told me all his secrets without any reserve whatever.

This friendship of ours was a great subject of uneasiness to my father. He was always afraid lest I should come to any harm through it. Not that there was any real harm in Colas, but he was restless and reckless, and seemed to have a different spirit in him from any of us.

"He may be thy next-of-kin," my father would say, "but I had rather see thee less friendly with him. One never knows where a fellow like that will end." And most people were of the same way of thinking; so that Monsieur le Doyen's opinion of him was quite a surprise to both of us, and doubly inclined me to meet his advances half-way.

The lessons in themselves, after all, were pleasant enough. We sat in the old Professor's snug room, which Clémence had put ready for us, and when we had read a little, written a little, and worked a few easy sums, our teacher would lean back in his arm-chair and tell us some story of bygone times or far-off lands, or some great event which formed part of his own varied experience. When the lesson had reached this stage, Clémence would come quietly into the room and take her place at the table with her work, and then,

however thrilling the story, I nearly always lost the thread of it, as, watching the glint of the lamplight on her golden hair and the quick grace of her deft fingers, I built castles in the air out of my hopes and my love.

But Colas would fix his eyes on the old priest's face, drinking in every word and interrupting now and then with an eager question.

"Ab, Colas," he would say when the end came and we rose to say good night, "that sounds something like! If it was only our luck to see the world instead of drowsing away here."

"All in good time, my lad," Monsieur le Doyen would answer, "all in good time."

My cousin soon found out that he was a favourite with his teacher, and the two became great friends. So it came about one evening that Colas broached a subject which I knew had been near his heart ever since his childhood—his wish to be a soldier.

"Monsieur le Doyen," he began, "do you not think it a great mistake for a man to spend his life at a trade he hates?"

Monsieur le Doyen smiled.

"I suppose," he said, "that you are the man, Colas, and slate-dressing the trade in question?"

Colas assented; and I wondered how any one could guess so quickly what was in another person's mind.

"But, mon ami," he went on, "you must remember that changing one's trade is a serious matter. You are outgrowing the age of apprenticeship."

"I am not too old to learn to be a soldier," rejoined my cousin.

Monsieur le Doyen raised his eyebrows.

"Ah!" he said, "you have a fancy for wearing a uniform. Well, you will draw in the conscription next year, n'est-ce pas?"

"Draw in the conscription!" cried Colas; "yes, and if I draw a good number—which probably I shall not—I shall be a soldier for three years. I don't want that. I want to enlist to serve because I choose to, and for all my life."

Monsieur le Doyen smiled again. Clémence laid down her work and looked at Colas.

"And why do you not enlist?" she asked simply.

"Because," cried Colas impetuously, "because my father is the best slate-dresser in Frahan, and because he has

made up his mind I must follow in his steps. He even tries to find reasons why I should be exempted from the conscription."

"If that is so, mon ami," rejoined Monsieur le Doyen, "my advice is that you should try to like your present occupation. With a little good will—"

"Mon père," blurted out my cousin desperately, "do not bid me do what is impossible. I was going to ask you to speak to my father for me. He would listen to you."

"My lad," was the grave answer, "I have no shadow of right to interfere between father and son."

Colas's face fell, and before he spoke Clémence began eagerly:

"But Colas gives you the right, mon oncle. Why should you not help him? If his heart is in a soldier's life he will make a good soldier. If he hates the slate quarry, how can he be a good workman?"

I was surprised to see that Colas scarcely gave a glance of gratitude to his unexpected supporter. He only echoed her words.

"Yes," he said, "I should be a good soldier, but a good workman—never!"

Monsieur le Doyen did not speak. He looked from one to the other of us.

"And you, Colas," he said, suddenly addressing me, "do you, too, want to be a soldier?"

"I, monsieur?" I cried, surprised that he, who I fancied could read thoughts, should ask. "No, indeed; I only long for the conscription to be safely over."

Clémence took up her work again, and in the silence her needles clicked audibly. Colas watched Monsieur le Doyen anxiously.

"Lads," he said finally, "it is already late. Good night! Colas, I scarcely think you must count on my pleading your cause."

He did, however, make an opportunity for speaking of my cousin's future with my uncle Marcel, but with no good result.

"I was a fool to set him on," Colas said to me a few days later. "It has been the finishing touch to the whole matter. My father went into a towering rage and told me that if I enlisted I was no longer a son of his. Then my mother made me promise solemnly not to enlist, and now I have no hope but in the conscription. If I draw a good number, and get once into a regiment, who knows what may happen? Ah, Colas, I will make 'neuvaines' to all the saints that I may get that number."

Before long I, too, began to feel as if I must make "neuvaines" that Colas might get his heart's desire, for, from the evening on which Clémence had astonished me by pleading his cause, I had noticed something in her manner which filled me with a vague, cruel jealousy. In vain I tried to persuade myself that I was mistaken; that she felt an equal interest in us both. I saw, in spite of myself, that she had a preference, and that her preference was not for me. Moreover, Monsieur le Doyen began to encourage my cousin to spend more and more of his spare time there, and my uncle Marcel took to looking very wise about the whole affair.

"I've made Hiernaux understand," he said, "that no more nonsense is to be talked about soldiering, and if the lad will only lose his heart to Clémence Servais, who is a tidy girl, and will have a nice 'dot,' he may come to his sober senses about earning his living as a wise man should, and leave off hankering after a uniform to charm the hearts of silly nursemaids."

But Colas had not lost his heart to Clémence. He even laughed to me one day over some hints his father had let fall.

"As if I should fall in love with her!" he said. "I don't say she isn't pretty and a good sort of girl in her way. But falling in love is not in my line."

Yes, certainly it would be better for Colas to draw a good number and to go away. I could, perhaps, give up my own happiness to him if he stayed, but Clémence's—that was a different matter.

So the winter slipped away, and in the spring came the day when Colas and I and all the other lads of our age in the district trooped over to Bouillon for the "tirage." We went shouting and singing, hiding our nervousness under as much noise as we could make. Only Colas was quieter than his wont. When we reached Bouillon we found a dozen other parties all as noisy and as nervous as our own, and we heard that our "arrondissement" was to send up seventy conscripts. That means that those who drew numbers above seventy could go quietly home and think no more about soldiering.

The drawing began at ten o'clock in the large hall of the "mairie." We were summoned village by village. First our names were called over, then we were measured, weighed, and examined, and a description of each lad was entered in a

great register; finally those who had reasons to give why they should be exempted from service gave them. I had no reason to plead, nor had Colas. Then we were ordered to pass, one by one, in front of a table on which stood a vase containing the numbers. There was a number for every one, even for those who had pleaded exemption; but as the slip of paper on which the number was printed was tightly enclosed in a little wooden case, no one knew his fate until the "scrutateur," who stood behind the table, drew out the paper and read aloud the number, which a clerk immediately entered against the name of the drawer.

"Make haste," said the "scrutateur" when my turn came, and I let my hand linger hesitatingly in the vase. "What do you hope to gain by fingering the numbers?"

I seized one and handed it to him. He drew the paper from its groove and read: "Seventy-eight—Colas Dufrêne, Frahan, seventy-eight; à un autre," and another went and I rushed out into the open air, my heart almost bursting with joy. A few minutes after Colas joined me. There was no joy on his face.

"It is all over with me," he said gloomily. "I wish I hadn't promised not to enlist."

There was great rejoicing in Frahan that night, for not one lad in the village had drawn a number which would oblige him to serve; but my cousin Colas made no secret of his disappointment, and I felt troubled, too, when I thought of Clémence, and of the shadow that was coming between us.

About ten days later, as my cousin and I were on our way to our evening lesson, we saw the burgomaster coming up the street, an official-looking document in his hand.

"Well met," he cried as he reached us. "I was on my way to find you. This"—holding out the paper—"has been sent from the 'bureau de recrutement' for Colas Dufrêne, for which one I can't say."

He looked as if he would like to know the contents of it, but my cousin took it and walked away before he broke the seal. I read it over his shoulder as we went along.

"I see," he cried, before I had mastered its meaning; "they have made out the exemptions, and are calling on the numbers in order to fill the vacancies. And you drew seventy-eight?"

"Seventy-eight!" I gasped; "yes, I did. And is this for me—a summons to march? Mon Dieu! how terrible!"

"Yes," he said bitterly, "for you—that is just how things happen. Curse the whole thing!"

We had reached Monsieur le Doyen's house. He opened the door roughly and went in. There were no books on the table, and Clémence started up as we entered.

"Oh, dear," she said, "I ought to have let you know. I forgot it was so late. My uncle has been summoned to a sick man at Rochehaut—there can be no lesson to-night. Why, what is the matter with you both?" she went on, laughing. "Is it such a disappointment to miss your reading, or are you angry with me for forgetting to send you word?"

"This is what is the matter," cried Colas, throwing the fateful paper down on the table. "Look at that."

She took it up and read it carefully.

"But I do not understand why you are vexed," she said. "This is surely a summons for a conscript in place of one who has proved his right to exemption. Is not that the same thing as if you had drawn a good number? Why are you angry?"

"Because it is not for me at all," replied Colas irritably.

"Not for you?" she repeated, "not for you?"

"I did not draw that number," he went on impatiently; "it is for him." And he made a contemptuous gesture in my direction.

Clémence took up the paper again.

"And you?" she said, turning to me. "Are you glad or sorry?"

"What is the use of asking him?" interrupted Colas. "What has he always said? He hates the thought of it."

Clémence re-read the summons before she spoke again. Then she said slowly:

"After all it is pure chance who gets a certain number. This seems to me very simple. This summons is to Colas Dufrêne."

She paused and looked from one to the other of us. My heart gave a great throb, and I saw my cousin's eyes flash.

"For Colas Dufrêne," she went on. "Now, you two both answer to that name, you are both of a height, you are both—"

"But, Clémence," I broke in.

"But, Clémence," she mimicked me. "Now, tell me, which would be better for you: to go and live in some town which would seem like a prison to you, and let home-sickness gnaw the heart out of you, or to stick to a life in which you are happy, and which to Colas is just misery?"

I covered my face with my hands. I wanted to do what was right, but the temptation was very great.

"What is the use of arguing?" she went on. "The moral justice of the exchange outweighs the surface cheating; and then the numbers are mere chance—arbitrary chance. Here, Colas, take the paper—present yourself."

"But," I pleaded feebly, "if we were found out. If the authorities came to know, and I am sure I could never carry it through."

"Fiddlesticks!" retorted Colas, "you are a fool. There is nothing for you to carry through. All you have to do is to hold your tongue."

We talked it over a little more, and in the end it was I who yielded, though, in truth, none of the arguments they used weighed so much with me as the thought that Clémence and I would be drawn closer by a common secret, and that I should be near to her—I who loved her—while Colas, who took no heed of her growing fancy for him, would be far away—for three whole years.

My uncle Maréchal was slow to understand the turn affairs had taken. He had looked on the conscription as a danger safely passed, and his anger and agitation prevented his going calmly enough into the matter to detect Colas's deception. Nor was there any difficulty with the authorities. Personally, Colas answered nearly enough to my description to stand in my stead in the cursory examination. As to me, I held my peace and tried to quiet my conscience, and in a few weeks' time, Colas, being a fine, stalwart fellow, was drafted into a régiment d'élite—the Guides—and ordered into barracks at Brussels.

ADVERTISEMENT DEPARTMENT.

For particulars respecting Advertisement Spaces, address THE ADVERTISING MANAGER of "All the Year Round," No. 168, Fleet Street, London, E.C.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.